

people are made of glass and dust

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Summary: "Why do you think it always comes back to you and me?" - oneshot, Leanne thinks about Nick

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_people are made of glass and dust _

She often goes back to that moment, in her head, these days.

She can remember standing in the cold, so very long ago now, her coat done up close around her, her bones weary with sadness; can remember the words forming on her lips.

"Why do you think it always comes back to me and you?" she'd said into the dark.

It's something she's wrestled with over the years, wrestled with her whole marriage to Peter, and ever since their second chance turned out to end exactly the same way as their first â€" full of recriminations and regrets and so many what ifs.

She thought after that, it was over, for good, for real â€" but then that's what she thought the first time, and then when she chose Peter over him, and now it's painfully, blindingly obvious that there will never be a day when it is over.

She looks over, sees him drinking with Carla, the ring on her finger seemingly screaming at her. Why Carla? Why of everyone in the world, why her? Why the woman who slept with Peter, her husband; why the woman she blamed for the fire that killed the man she would have married?

But maybe that's an answer in itself. Maybe he doesn't know it, but Carla is just a way of making her hurt that bit more, when he

announces he's moved on in the most complete way possible.

Or maybe he doesn't know what picking Carla does to her, how it makes her ache inside, because this her second husband to fall in love (or so they claim) with her. Maybe he's still angry with her, about the way they left things, about Kal, about how she moved on. Maybe it started as revenge, but Leanne has found out over the years that there's something about Carla Connor that makes men (_her_ men, _her_ husband's) fall for her.

Or maybe her words were wrong. She was wrong about their marriage lasting after all. Maybe he really has fallen for Carla Connor, and things won't go back, won't fall into old patterns.

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It came to her one morning.

She was behind the bar, and Nick was there and they were joking, laughing, just like the old times, and the way he looked at she could have sworn time had gone back, but she was seeing things, because then Carla came in and she saw him look at her too.

There was a dull ache inside her, so familiar, so foreign. And that was when she knew she was right when she said it always came back to them.

She wasn't expecting it. She thought he was gone from her life, but she's thought that before of course.

She had finally realised how he had felt when she was marrying another man, but Nick had known she didn't love Peter- at least not the way she should have, but Leanne doesn't know if he doesn't love Carla; in fact she thinks it might be the opposite.

And it had hurt her.

(that was long ago now, months, and they're getting married soon, and Nick looks at his wife-to-be like she's the sun and it breaks Leanne in a way she never quite expected)

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She sits alone at home, trying to forget about him â€" the man she has loved since she was sixteen. She might not have always known it, but it's always been there, beneath the surface.

And seeing him happy with _her_, _it_ hits her deep. She wants to slap him to sense, tell him she's not worth it, that she'll hurt him, that he _can't_ love her, not really. But she doesn't. Because she's had her chance and they blew it.

Then she had her second chance, and they blew that to.

There will be no third chance, she knows that, now.

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She can remember the first time she held him. She can remember the last time too.

She wonders why it always has to be like this. They go their separate ways, and then a little while later they realise that they got it wrong. So many times that story has played out.

Their first divorce, followed by the affair when he returned.

She chooses Peter over him, only to find that Peter never loved her and she was lying to herself about her real feelings; that Nick was always what she really wanted.

And now. The second divorce. He moves on, she realises she wants him back.

No happy ending this time.

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She wonders what he'll say if she tells him. Would it be a reversal of roles? Would he reject her like she rejected him, so many moons ago, before their affair, before realised that it was him, not Peter, who had her heart?

Or would he laugh and say, "It always comes back to me and you," and he'd hold her just like before and the world would right itself.

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But she thinks he really loves Carla and all she wants is him to be happy.

So she keeps her mouth shut, remembering their wedding day, the second (technically third), the day she'd told him it was for keeps, it was forever.

She was wrong and she's never been so damaged inside to be wrong about something.

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They'll get married, move away, and she'll never see him again.

Or maybe she will. Maybe he'll always be there, _Carla's_ ring on his finger screaming at her that he's not hers anymore.

Maybe she'll have to live with it.

No. That's exactly what she has to do.

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She stands in the Bistro, smiling because she can remember what it felt like to be loved just standing in these four walls.

Then the door opens and they walk in.

The smile fades.

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She wonders if Kal had lived, if she would feel the way she does.

Maybe she would be happy with another man, and would wish Carla good luck instead of go to hell.

But he's dead and she's not sure if it would have lasted anyway. It was too soon after her divorce, it was an infatuation, it was a way to leave her past behind her.

But if Leanne's learnt something over the years, it's that Nick never stays in her past for too long.

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Maybe this time, she got it _wrong_.

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A/N The title is from Remain by Tyrone Wells

End
file.